

## **Chickpea & Rosemary Soup with Roasted Red Pepper Soffritto.**

*By Chef John Vetere*

### Ingredients

#### Soup

- 1 pound Pound Dried Chickpeas
- 1 large Carrot, Diced
- 1 large Onion, Peeled & Diced
- 2 Stalk Celery, Diced
- 6 Tbsp Chopped Pancetta or bacon (optional)
- 2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 3 Cloves Garlic, Peeled & Minced
- 2L Chicken or Vegetable stock
- Salt & Pepper
- 2 rosemary sprigs
- 2 bay leaves

#### Soffritto (Italian for 'fried slowly')

- 2 pc sweet Italian sausage, casings removed and crumbled (optional)
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 pc roasted red pepper (from a jar or roasted in oven and peeled), chopped
- 1 cup dry white wine or dry vermouth
- 3 Tbsp olive oil

### Method

- Starting the night before, place the dried beans in a bowl and cover with water 4-5 inches above the chickpeas.
- Cover the bowl and let rest overnight in the fridge.
- Drain the beans the next day and place in a pot and cover with fresh water and add bay leaf.
- Bring the water to a boil, then decrease to a simmer and cook until the beans are tender. (This may take 30 to 45 minutes depending on the beans, or use a pressure cooker).
- Remove from heat and let the chickpeas cool in their liquid, season with salt.
- In a large pot, heat the oil and then add the pancetta (optional), carrots, onion, celery and garlic.
- Cook until the vegetables are tender and the pancetta pieces are lightly browned.
- Remove about 1/2 of the chickpeas and add to the vegetables, set the remaining aside until later.
- Cover everything with broth by at least 1-2 inches, reserve leftover broth for another recipe.

- Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and slowly simmer for another 30 minutes or so to develop and meld the flavours.
- Season with salt and pepper and add in rosemary stalks whole. (This allows for easy removal later).
- Meanwhile, in a frying pan over medium-low heat, add the oil and the crumbled sausage. If not using the sausage, skip this step.
- Add in the onion and garlic and slowly fry with the sausage until nice colour develops, about 15 minutes, breaking up the sausage into small pieces.
- Add in the chopped roasted peppers and continue to cook for another 5 minutes.
- Turn up heat to high and deglaze with wine, cook until wine is almost evaporated, season with salt and pepper and set aside to cool.
- Remove the rosemary stalks and puree the soup until thick and smooth, adding additional broth as needed.
- Return the soup to the heat and stir in the left over chickpeas you had set aside earlier.

- Serve in individual bowls topped with some cracked black pepper, a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and heaping spoon of the roasted red pepper sofrito.
- Enjoy.